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MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE FOURTH

Convention of Delegates

FROM THE

ABOLITION SOCIETIES

Eſtabliſhed in different Parts of the United States,

ASSEMBLED AT

PHILADELPHIA,

ON THE THIRD DAY OF MAY, ONE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED AND NINETY-SEVEN, AND CONTINUED, BY ADJOURNMENTS, UNTIL THE NINTH DAY OF THE SAME MONTH, INCLUSIVE.

Philadelphia:

PRINTED BY ZACHARIAH POULSON, JUNIOR,
NUMBER EIGHTY, CHESNUT-STREET.

1797.

MINUTES

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE FOURTH

Convention of Delegates.

May third, 1797.

REPRESENTATIVES from ſeveral of the Abolition Societies eſtabliſhed in various parts of the United States, having aſſembled in the Senate Chamber at Philadelphia, on the third of May, 1797; it appeared, by credentials produced, that the following perſons were appointed Delegates to this Convention:

Willett Seaman,
Thomas Eddy,
Samuel L. Mitchill,
William Dunlap,
Elihu Hubbard Smith,
} *From New-York.*

Joſeph

Joſeph Bloomfield,
Richard Hartſhorne,
Joſeph Sloan,
William Cox, junior,
William Carpenter, } *From New-Jerſey.*

Benjamin Ruſh,
William Rawle,
Samuel Powel Griffitts,
Caſpar Wiſtar,
Samuel Coates,
Robert Patterſon,
James Todd, } *From Pennſylvania.*

Seth Hill Evitts, - - *From Choptank.*

Francis Johonnett,
Jeſſe Tyſon,
Gerrard T. Hopkins, } *From Baltimore.*

Joſeph Anthony, - - *From Richmond.*

George Drinker, - - *From Alexandria.*

Of whom the following attended and took their ſeats:

William Dunlap,
Elihu H. Smith,
Joſeph Bloomfield,
Richard Hartſhorne,
Joſeph Sloan,
Benjamin Ruſh,
Samuel P. Griffitts,
William Cox, junior,
Samuel Coates,
James Todd,
Seth Hill Evitts,
Jeſſe Tyſon,
Francis Johonnett,
Gerrard T. Hopkins,
Joſeph Anthony,
George Drinker,
and
Robert Patterſon.

Joſeph Bloomfield was elected Preſident.

Thomas

Thomas P. Cope was appointed Secretary, and Jacob Meyer, Door-keeper.

Communications from New-York, Pennſylvania, Choptank, Maryland and Alexandria Abolition Societies were preſented and read.

Adjourned till ten o'clock A. M. to-morrow.

May fourth, 1797.

Preſent:

Joſeph Bloomfield, Preſident,

William Dunlap,	Seth Hill Evitts,
Elihu H. Smith,	Francis Johonnett,
Richard Hartshorne,	Jeſſe Tyſon,
Joſeph Sloan,	Gerrard T. Hopkins,
William Cox, junior,	George Drinker,
Samuel P. Griffitts,	Joſeph Anthony,
Samuel Coates,	James Todd,
Caſpar Wiſtar,	Robert Patterſon.

Communications from the New-Jerſey and Virginia ſocieties were produced and read.

It was, on motion,

Reſolved, That Elihu H. Smith, Richard Hartshorne, Robert Patterſon, Seth Hill Evitts, Francis Johonnett, George Drinker and Joſeph Anthony be a committee to take into conſideration the reports from the different Abolition Societies, and to report to the Convention the meaſures neceſſary to be taken in

in conſequence of thoſe communications, as well as the objects proper for the attention of the Convention.

Samuel P. Griffitts ſtated, that the members appointed by the laſt Convention to notify the Abolition Societies of the meeting of this Convention, to have the proceedings of the former Conventions tranſcribed, and, with the papers, depoſited in the care of the Preſident of the Pennſylvania Society, had fully performed the ſervice aſſigned them.

Adjourned till three o'clock P. M. to-morrow.

May fifth, 1797.

Preſent:

Joſeph Bloomfield, Preſident,

Elihu H. Smith,	Francis Johonnett,
Richard Hartshorne,	Samuel Coates,
Joſeph Sloan,	James Todd,
William Cox, junior,	Seth H. Evitts,
Benjamin Ruſh,	Jeſſe Tyſon,
Samuel P. Griffitts,	Robert Patterſon,
Caſpar Wiſtar,	Gerrard T. Hopkins,
William Dunlap,	George Drinker,
Samuel L. Mitchill,	Joſeph Anthony.

The committee appointed at the laſt meeting to take into conſideration the reports from the different Abolition Societies, and to report to the Convention the meaſures neceſſary to be

be taken in conſequence of thoſe communications, as well as the objects proper for the attention of the Convention, made the following report, which was read and conſidered by paragraphs.

The committee to whom were referred the ſeveral communications made to the Convention, and who were directed to conſider what objects are proper for the attention of the Convention, and the moſt ſuitable means for their attainment, report,

I. That they have carefully attended to the communications, from the ſeveral Societies, made to the Convention for the paſt and preſent years, and compared them with the recommendations and requiſitions of the Convention of 1796. By the annexed table, the Convention will perceive what theſe requiſitions and recommendations were, and how far each ſociety has complied therewith.

II. The committee recommend it to the Convention, to addreſs a letter or memorial to the Secretary of State of the United States, recapitulating the evidence which the records of the Diſtrict Court of the United States, for the Pennſylvania Diſtrict afford, of attempts made by citizens of the United States, to evade the law prohibiting our citizens from ſupplying foreign countries with ſlaves, by clandeſtinely uſing the Daniſh flag and regiſters, and praying ſuch aid and interference of the government of the United States, with the court of Denmark, or with other governments

under

under whoſe authority ſuch practices now obtain, as may conſiſt with propriety, for the prevention of the uſe of their flag or regiſters, by the citizens of the United States, under any pretence whatever, for the purpoſe of purſuing the trade in men.

III. It appearing from the report of the Alexandria Society, that the law of the United States, entitled, "An act to prohibit the carrying on the ſlave-trade from the United States to any foreign place or country," is defective, in that it does not prevent the ſhipment of ſlaves (for ſale in the Weſt Indies and elſewhere) on board veſſels, not ſpecially fitted out for that purpoſe—the act being thereby evaded.

The committee recommend it to the Convention, to preſent a memorial or petition to Congreſs, praying ſuch an amendment of the act above referred to, as may oblige the maſter or owner of any veſſel or veſſels before clearing out, to declare on oath or affirmation, that no ſlaves are received or taken on board ſaid veſſel or veſſels, for ſale in any foreign port; and as may further oblige him to enter into a recognizance or bond, with a ſufficient penalty to be put in ſuit, and the penalty recovered, in caſe a ſale of any ſlave ſo put on board ſhould take place.

IV. It appears from the papers from North Carolina, that, by a law of that ſtate, paſſed in 1777, certain negroes and others, who had been previouſly emancipated by their proprietors

prietors, citizens of that ſtate, were taken up, and again reduced to ſlavery; and this, not only where the perſons ſo emancipated had continued in the ſtate, but alſo where the emancipation had been effected in other ſtates, and the freed-man had returned into North Carolina, to reſide there: in both caſes, in direct violation of the conſtitution of the ſtate. But the committee would recommend it to the Convention to obtain the opinion of the moſt eminent counſel in this city, whether an action for damages, by a perſon emancipated in another ſtate before the paſſing of the act in 1777, and who was again reduced to ſlavery on returning to North Carolina, could not be maintained againſt the purchaſer or holder of ſuch perſon in the Courts of the United States; or whether any, and what legal remedy may be had for perſons under theſe circumſtances, and where they were made ſlaves, without having quitted the ſtate.

V. The committee are further of opinion, that much advantage would reſult from annexing ſhort and comprehenſive abſtracts of the laws now in force in the ſeveral ſtates, relative to Africans and other people of color, (ſo far as may be practicable at this time) to the printed minutes of this Convention, for the information of the ſeveral Societies, and recommend it accordingly.

VI. The benefits which ſeem to have reſulted from the addreſs made to the free blacks in the United States by the Convention of

1796, in the judgment of the committee, indicate the propriety of a ſimilar addreſs the preſent year, reiterating the moſt important articles of advice contained in the former, and acquainting them with the general good effects which it has produced.

VII. The great object of the ſeveral Conventions in collecting the various information which they have ſolicited from the Societies, being to obtain materials for the compoſition, at ſome future time of a general hiſtory of ſlavery in the United States, it ſeems neceſſary to uſe means for procuring the proper documents from thoſe ſtates wherein no Abolition Societies now exiſt; it is the opinion of the committee, that the Convention ſhould, therefore, procure the aſſiſtance of ſuitable perſons in thoſe ſtates wherein no Societies for promoting the abolition of ſlavery are inſtituted, by whoſe means authentic copies of all laws paſſed therein ſince the ſettlement of the country may be obtained.

VIII. The committee recommend it to the Convention, to ſend letters to the Societies in London and Paris, communicating general information concerning the progreſs of emancipation in the United States ſince the laſt Convention; and accompanied by copies of the printed minutes of this Convention. The committee alſo ſuggeſt the propriety of writing to the Governor and Council at Sierra Leone, requeſting ſuch minute and legal evidence as they can afford, which may in any

wiſe

wife tend to difcover and bring to condemnation thofe citizens of the United States, who, contrary to the laws of their country, purfue the traffic in flaves.

IX. Laftly—Your committee deem it proper and neceffary, that a circular addrefs be fent to the feveral Societies within the United States, requefting them, generally, to fend Delegates to a Convention to be held in the city of Philadelphia on the firft Wednefday of June, 1798, and particularly inculcating this meafure on thofe Societies who are unrepresented in the prefent Convention:—that this addrefs enjoin upon the Societies, a continued attention to the feveral requifitions of former Conventions as far as may apply to each, and referring them for information to the table accompanying this report, which the committee think proper to be annexed to the printed minutes of this Convention: that the fpecial attention of fuch Societies as have hitherto either partially or not at all acted in this matter, be called by the addrefs to the inftruction of the people of color within their limits:—and that it folicit every kind of information from the Societies, which may, in any wife, illuftrate the hiftory of flavery in the United States; finally, that it recommend to Societies exifting in the fame ftate, that they form a general plan of union or confederation, fo as on all important occafions, to act in concert.

The

The firſt ſection having been agreed to and the ſecond poſtponed, it was, on motion,

Reſolved, That the third be referred to a committee, conſiſting of James Todd and George Drinker, who are authorized to take the opinion of legal counſel on the ſubject, and if ſuch counſel prove favorable to the purpoſe of the recommendation therein contained, to prepare and report a memorial accordingly—The fourth ſection was alſo referred to the ſame committee.

The fifth ſection was committed to William Dunlap, Joſeph Sloan, Robert Patterſon and Jeſſe Tyſon, who are to collect and arrange the abſtracts therein mentioned.

Benjamin Ruſh and Samuel Coates were appointed a committee to prepare an addreſs agreeably to the recommendation contained in the ſixth ſection.

The following reſoluion was adopted reſpecting the ſeventh ſection, *viz.*

Reſolved, That it be recommended to the Pennſylvania Society, to carry into effect that part of the recommendation which relates to the ſtates ſouthward of New-York; and to the New-York Society, to carry into effect ſuch part as regards the ſtates to the northward of New-York.

The eighth ſection was referred to Samuel L. Mitchill, William Cox, junior, and Caſpar Wiſtar, who are to prepare drafts of addreſſes conformably thereto.

Samuel

Samuel P. Griffitts, Caſpar Wiſtar, Richard Hartſhorne and Joſeph Anthony were appointed a committee to report an addreſs as propoſed in the ninth ſection.

The ſecond ſection was then taken up, and Samuel P. Griffitts and Samuel Coates appointed a committee to report thereon.

Seth Hill Evitts, obtained leave of abſence on account of ſickneſs in his family.

The Convention adjourned till three o'clock on Monday afternoon.

May eighth, 1797.

Preſent:

Joſeph Bloomfield, Preſident,

Elihu H. Smith,	Samuel Coates,
William Dunlap,	Robert Patterſon,
Richard Hartſhorne,	James Todd,
Joſeph Sloan,	Francis Johonnett,
Bejamin Ruſh,	Jeſſe Tyſon,
Samuel P. Griffitts,	Gerrard T. Hopkins,
Caſpar Wiſtar,	George Drinker,
Samuel L. Mitchill,	Joſeph Anthony.

The committee, on the third and fourth ſections of the report of the committee to whom were referred the ſeveral communications made to the Convention, made report which was read.

Ordered to lie on the table.

The

The committee on the ſixth ſection, reported an addreſs to the free Africans and other free people of color in the United States, which was read.

Ordered to lie on the table.

The committee on the eighth ſection reported eſſays of the letters directed to be written, which were read.

Ordered to lie on the table.

The committee on the ſecond ſection made report, which was read.

Ordered to lie on the table.

The committee on the ninth ſection made report, which was read.

Ordered to lie on the table.

The committee on the fifth ſection reported a number of abſtracts of laws reſpecting ſlavery, which were

Ordered to lie on the table.

The report of the committee on the third and fourth ſections, was then taken up, and, with the opinion of counſel on the ſubject, read a ſecond time.

Whereupon,

Reſolved, That a committee of two be appointed to draft and report a letter to the Secretary of the treaſury of the United States, reciting the information which the Convention have received concerning the manner of evading the law of the United States prohibiting the ſupplying foreign nations with ſlaves,

ſlaves, and requeſting him to addreſs particular inſtructions to the ſeveral collectors ſo as to prevent ſuch evaſion. Elihu H. Smith and James Todd, were appointed a committee for carrying this reſolution into effect.

The addreſs to the free Africans and other free people of color in the United States, was called up and after conſideration re-committed.

The letter propoſed to be ſent to the committee of the London ſociety, inſtituted for the purpoſe of effecting the abolition of the ſlave trade, as reported by the committee on the eighth ſection, was then read; and after amendment agreed to, and the Secretary was requeſted to have a fair copy of it prepared for the ſignature of the Preſident.

The letter to the ſociety of the friends of the blacks at Paris, as reported by the ſame committee, was read, and after amendment re-committed.

The committee appointed to draft and report a letter to the Secretary of the treaſury, reported one, which was read.

Ordered to lie on the table.

The Convention then entered into a conſideration of the addreſs to the Governor and Council of the Sierra Leone ſettlement, which was agreed to.

Adjourned till ten o'clock to-morrow morning.

May

May ninth, 1797.

Preſent:

Joſeph Bloomfield, Preſident,

Samuel L. Mitchill,	Samuel Coates,
William Dunlap,	James Todd,
Elihu H. Smith,	Francis Johonnett,
Richard Hartshorn,	Jeſſe Tyſon,
Joſeph Sloan,	Gerrard T. Hopkins,
Samuel P. Griffitts,	George Drinker,
Robert Patterſon,	Joſeph Anthony.
Caſpar Wiſtar,	

The committee to whom was re-committed the addreſs to the free Africans and other free people of color in the United States, made report, which was read, conſidered by paragraphs, and finally agreed to as follows:

TO THE

Free Africans and other free People of color

IN THE

UNITED STATES.

THE Convention of Delegates from the Abolition Societies in the United States, having again aſſembled for the purpoſe of promoting your happineſs, conſider it their duty, once more to call your attention to the advice which was addreſſed to you by the Convention of laſt year; and which we ſubjoin to the preſent addreſs, in order that you may at one view be able to profit by theſe collected advices of your ſincereſt friends. The oftner we review

view that advice, the more we are impreſſed with its importance, and the more anxious we are to urge your ſtrict and faithful obſervance of it. We ſhall only add thereto, at preſent, one other requeſt, and that is, that you would avoid gaming in all its varied forms—the ruinous and miſerable conſequences of this moſt pernicious evil, are ſo notorious, and ſo generally acknowledged, that we cannot too forcibly endeavour to guard you againſt it. It ſubjects you to the controul of the moſt degrading paſſions, and too generally leads to the loſs of fortune, reputation, and of every good principle.

We can with peculiar ſatisfaction inform you, that ſchools and places of worſhip have been eſtabliſhed, and that they are well attended by people of your color, in New-York, New-Jerſey, Pennſylvania, Maryland, Virginia and other places; and we are happy to find, that many of you have evinced, by your prudent and moral conduct, that you are not unworthy of the freedom you enjoy.

Go on in theſe paths of virtue:—By perſevering in them you will juſtify the ſolicitude and labors of your friends in your behalf, and furniſh an additional argument for the emancipation of ſuch of your brethren as are yet in bondage in the United States and in other parts of the world.

Whereupon,

Reſolved,

Reſolved, That the ſaid addreſs be ſigned by the Preſident, atteſted by the Secretary, and that three thouſand copies thereof together with a like number of the former addreſs to the ſame people, be printed in the form of hand bills, to be diſtributed by the different Abolition Societies, in ſuch way as may to them appear the moſt proper.

The committee to whom was re-committed the letter to the ſociety of the friends of the blacks of Paris brought in their report, which was conſidered by paragraphs, amended and finally agreed to.

The letter to the Secretary of the treaſury was read a ſecond time and adopted as follows:

The Delegates from the ſeveral Abolition Societies eſtabliſhed in the United States, in Convention aſſembled at Philadelphia,

Reſpectfully repreſent,

That it appears, by information received by us, that the act of Congreſs, paſſed March twenty-ſecond, 1794, prohibiting our citizens from ſupplying foreign nations with ſlaves, is evaded in certain parts of the union, by the ſhipment of one, two, or a few ſlaves for ſale in a foreign port, on board of veſſels not ſpecially fitted out for carrying on the ſlave trade. The Convention have taken the opinion of counſel on the ſubject, and are aſſured, that ſuch ſhipments are equally a breach of law with thoſe made on board of veſſels originally deſtined to this traffic; this

aſſurance,

aſſurance, derived from reſpectable authority, encourages us to make application to you, as the proper officer of the government of the United States, to exert the powers with which you are inveſted, for the prevention of the offences of which we complain. Hitherto they have been committed with impunity, from a perſuaſion, on the part of the collectors of certain ports, that the prohibitions of the law did not extend to the caſes referred to. But if, in the opinion of the Secretary of the Treaſury, the exiſting law of Congreſs is deſigned to include theſe caſes in its reſtrictions of the commerce in men, we feel a firm conviction that he will not refuſe his friendly interference in its ſupport, on the preſent occaſion; but will readily conſent to forward ſuch inſtructions to the proper officers, as ſhall prevent all future doubt in reſpect to the meaning of the law, and all future connivance at its violation. The difficulty of bringing to juſtice thoſe who are concerned in evading the proviſions of the law in queſtion, in thoſe parts of the union where they are moſt common, renders it neceſſary that great care ſhould be taken to remove every poſſible pretext for acting in oppoſition to its true intent. The force of this remark, we have no doubt, will be fully comprehended by the Secretary of the Treaſury, and juſtify the propriety of this addreſs.

The

The letter to the Secretary of State of the United States, was read a ſecond time and adopted in the following words:

The Delegates from the ſeveral Abolition Societies eſtabliſhed in the United States, in Convention aſſembled at Philadelphia,

Reſpectfully repreſent,

That the recent condemnation of two veſſels engaged in a commerce contrary to the act of Congreſs of March twenty-ſecond, 1794, which prohibits the citizens of theſe ſtates from ſupplying foreign nations with ſlaves, has furniſhed us with ſufficient evidence to prove that the Daniſh flag and regiſters have been made uſe of to cover theſe clandeſtine undertakings. Under theſe circumſtances we feel ourſelves impelled by the powerful motives of humanity and duty to our country, to forward the encloſed evidence, duly given to the Diſtrict Court of Pennſylvania, and to requeſt ſuch aid and interference of the Executive of the United States with the Court of Denmark and other foreign powers, under whoſe authority ſuch practices now obtain, or may hereafter be attempted, as may be conſiſtent with propriety, to prevent the uſe of their flag and regiſters by citizens of the United States under any pretence whatever for the purpoſe of carrying on the commerce in men.

The following authenticated decree of the National Convention of France, was preſented by one of the delegates of Pennſylvania:

DECREE,

DECREE,

Which declares, that the ſlavery of the negroes is aboliſhed in all the colonies, and refers it to the committee of Public Safety to be put into form, and to report what meaſures are to be taken to carry it into effect.

Sixteenth Pluvios, ſecond year.

The National Convention declares, that the ſlavery of the negroes is aboliſhed in all the colonies: and therefore decrees, that all men, without diſtinction of color, who reſide in the colonies, are French citizens, and ſhall enjoy all thoſe rights ſecured to them by the Conſtitution.

Referred to the committee of public ſafety to report, forthwith, on the meaſures to be taken to carry this decree into effect.

(True copy.)

SONTHONAX,
RAIMOND.

Members of the Commiſſion, delegated by the French government to St. Domingo.

PASCAL, *Secretary General.**

* Extract from the twelfth article of the Conſular Convention, between France and the United States:

" All differences and ſuits between French citizens in the United States and between American citizens in the dominions of France, ſhall be determined by the reſpective Conſuls and Vice Conſuls, either by a reference to arbitrators, or by a ſummary judgment and without coſts—and no officer of the country, civil or military, ſhall interfere therein, or take any part whatever in the matter."

Whereupon,

Whereupon, On motion,

Reſolved, That there be ſent with the circular addreſs to each of the different Abolition Societies a copy thereof, certified by the proper officer in the United States.

The addreſs to the ſeveral Abolition Societies, was read a ſecond time by paragraphs, and adopted as follows, *viz.*

To the Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery.

To inform you of our proceedings; to ſolicit your further advice and aſſiſtance; and to requeſt your ſpecial attention to the original object of our meetings, we now addreſs you.

We have, as formerly, gone through our buſineſs with harmony and ſatisfaction; the peculiar objects thereof will appear from our minutes, herewith tranſmitted; and we can truly add, that the important advantages evidently ariſing from ſuch a collection of information and exchange of ſentiment are too obvious, not to unite us in the recommendation, that a ſimilar Convention of delegates from the different abolition ſocieties, be held in this city on the firſt day of June, 1798.

The non-compliance of ſeveral ſocieties with this propoſal for ſome years paſt, induces us to believe that ſome obſtacles may exiſt, which poſſibly might be removed; we therefore requeſt, that where it is not agreed to ſend delegates, ſuch ſocieties would favor the Convention, in writing, with their determination

nation and the cauſes of it. This will better enable the Convention to judge of the moſt proper mode of proceeding in future.

A table, containing the requiſitions of this and the former Conventions, and how far they have hitherto been complied with by each ſociety, will ſhew the propriety and and neceſſity of fulfilling theſe requiſitions; which, after being thus pointed out need not now be further inſiſted on.

When we conſider the extenſive influence of education on ſociety, we think a due attention to the inſtruction of the blacks and people of color of every deſcription cannot be too forcibly impreſſed. This will apply not merely to what is called ſchool learning, but eſſentially conſiſts in inculcating the ſound principles of morality and religion as well as habits of temperance and induſtry. From a continued regard to the welfare of this much injured and much oppreſſed people, we have again addreſſed them on ſuch points as we judged would be moſt beneficial; but it will in a great degree reſt with you to circulate and enforce the advice recommended: and we may add, that, as the evils which muſt neceſſarily reſult from their being retained in a ſtate of ignorance are incalculable, ſo it is, in our opinion, the greateſt and perhaps the only important ſervice we can render to them and to our country, to diſſeminate learning and morality amongſt them, thus raiſing them gradually and ſafely to that level, to which they muſt, in the courſe of time, inevitably attain.

The different Conventions have from year to year, endeavoured to procure from the Abolition Societies, every kind of information which may illuſtrate the hiſtory of ſlavery in the United States; we now repeat their requeſt, with a view to the formation of a hiſtory of this important ſubject.

From the general accounts received, as well as from our own obſervations, we are induced ſtrongly to recommend, that where ſeveral Abolition Societies exiſt in one ſtate, they would, if poſſible, form a general plan of union or confederation, ſo as, on all important occaſions, to act in concert.

You are already well informed of the act of Congreſs of March twenty-ſecond, 1794, prohibiting the citizens of the United States from ſupplying foreign nations with ſlaves; you will alſo moſt probably have heard that this wiſe and humane law has been too frequently violated by our citizens; in conſequence of which the Abolition Societies of Pennſylvania, New-York and Providence, have ſeverally commenced proſecutions againſt divers perſons and veſſels, engaged in this abominable traffic; the firſt named ſociety has been ſucceſsful in the two proſecutions they undertook in the Diſtrict Court of Pennſylvania and of the United States of America. The veſſels have been condemned, and actions are pending againſt the maſters and owners in the Circuit Court of the United States in and for the Pennſylvania diſtrict of the middle

middle circuit. There is good ground to believe that the other ſocieties will meet with equal ſucceſs.

Beſides the information mutually given by ſocieties to each other as occaſion may require, to aſſiſt them in checking ſuch clandeſtine practices, we believe it would be highly uſeful to forward every particular that comes to your knowledge on this ſubject, to the next Convention, who may make a very important uſe of it.

The difficulties which have continually occurred reſpecting the blacks and people of color who have for ſeveral years paſt emigrated from the French Weſt-Indies into the United States have engaged the attention of this and the preceding Conventions. To remove theſe difficulties, we tranſmit you a certified copy of an authenticated decree of the National Convention of France, of the ſixteenth Pluvioſe, ſecond year of the Republic; (February fifth, 1794) which has been lately received by the Pennſylvania Abolition Society. With this decree, ſince fully confirmed by the French conſtitution of 1795, we believe you will have it in your power to afford every legal and effectual aſſiſtance to theſe unfortunate people.

There yet remains a ſubject which, though often urged, ſtill continues to demand our ſerious attention; we allude to the moſt proper means of extending the principles of juſt and equal liberty amongſt mankind: and

as we profeſs to aſſume no other powers than thoſe of perſuaſion and convincement, founded on the unerring baſis of truth and juſtice, we wiſh you duly to advert to the magnitude of the cauſe in which we are engaged, to perſevere with patience and fortitude in your applications to legiſlative bodies and courts of juſtice, for the relief of our unfortunate African brethren, and to continue to enlighten the public mind, by ſpreading as much as poſſible, all kind of uſeful information on the ſubject: that thus we may, in every form, and on every occaſion, be ready to plead the cauſe of the oppreſſed, in the language of perſuaſion and of truth. And then we ſhall have done our duty; and then we may, in humble confidence, look up for the bleſſing and protection of the great Father of all, *whoſe ways are juſt and equal*, and *who hath made of one blood all nations of men.*

It was, on motion,

Reſolved, That ſo much of the reports from the ſeveral ſocieties, as relates to the ſubject of the education of Africans, and their deſcendants, be annexed in the form of an appendix to the printed minutes of this Convention.

Reſolved, That it be recommended, that all communications intended for the enſuing Convention, be directed to the care of James Pemberton, Philadelphia, Preſident of the Pennſylvania ſociety for promoting the abolition of ſlavery.

Reſolved,

Reſolved, That Samuel P. Griffitts, Samuel Coates, James Todd and Robert Patterſon, be a committee to ſuperintend the publication and diſtribution of the minutes of this Convention, as well as of the addreſs to the free blacks, the addreſſes to the ſeveral Abolition Societies, and the letters and memorials ordered by this Convention; to have the minutes of this year's proceedings copied, and to give three months notice to the ſocieties of the meeting of the Convention next year.

Reſolved, That the abſtracts of the laws of the ſeveral ſtates, reſpecting ſlavery and ſlaves, as reported by the committee appointed to execute them, be referred to the committee for printing and diſtributing the minutes of this Convention; who are hereby directed to obtain any neceſſary corrections, and cauſe them to be annexed as an appendix to the minutes aforeſaid.

Reſolved, That the ſame committee preſent to the Speaker of the Senate of Pennſylvania, the thanks of this Convention for the uſe of the Senate Chamber.

Reſolved, That fifteen hundred copies of the proceedings of the Convention be printed and diſtributed amongſt the ſeveral Abolition Societies in the United States.

Adjourned, *ſine die.*

Publiſhed by order of the Convention,

THOMAS P. COPE *Secretary.*

Philadelphia, May 9th. 1797.

APPENDIX.

Extract from the reports of the Abolition Societies respecting education.

New-York Society.

THE New York ſociety many years ſince, inſtituted a ſchool for the inſtruction of African deſcendants, in various ſpecies of knowledge; this inſtitution, which conſiderable experience has proved to be of the higheſt importance to the progreſs of emancipation and the welfare of the ſubjects of our care, has ſince the laſt Convention received a new ſhare of our attention, undergone a renovation, and is now on a more flouriſhing and reſpectable footing than at any former period. By an appropriation of the principal part of the funds of the ſociety, to this object, together with the annual dividend of the bounty of the ſtate, and the contributions of individuals, we have, at an expenſe of more than fourteen hundred pounds, purchaſed a building and lot ſuitable for our purpoſe, and the ſchool is now maintained at the rate of about one thouſand dollars a year. This inſtitution, as the Convention will obſerve from the conſtitution of the ſociety, is under the immediate inſpection of a board of Truſtees.* It is provided with a maſter

* *Conſtitution of the New-York Society, for promoting the manumiſſion of ſlaves and protecting ſuch of them as have been or may be liberated.*

ARTICLE VIII.

1. There ſhall be elected a Board of Truſtees for the African ſchool, to conſiſt of ten Members, beſides the Chairman and Secretary. At every ſtated meeting of the ſociety, the two Members firſt named on the liſt ſhall go out of office, and a new appointment of the like number be made.

2. The Truſtees are to meet ſtatedly once every month, and at ſuch other times as the Chairman ſhall require, and at ſuch places as he may direct, or the majority of them at any meeting ſhall appoint. Four of the Members with the Chairman ſhall make a ſufficient board to tranſact buſineſs, and if the Chairman be abſent five Members including a Chairman to be appointed for the time, ſhall conſtitute a board.

3. The Truſtees are empowered to procure the neceſſary inſtructors, and to provide all neceſſary accommodations for the ſchool, and to make contracts for theſe purpoſes, which ſhall be binding on the ſociety.

maſter, uſher and miſtreſs, by whom the pupils are taught reading, penmanſhip, arithmetic, Engliſh grammar and geography, and the female ſcholars, in addition, needle-work. The number of ſcholars on the firſt of January 1797, was one hundred and twenty-two; of whom ſixty-three were males, and fifty-nine females, and this is about the uſual number; many of them being of ſufficient age to be occaſionally ſerviceable to their parents and maſters, ſome irregularity unavoidably happens in their attendance, but this is not ſo conſiderable but that more than two-thirds are generally preſent. The appearance, conduct and progreſs of this ſchool, in the opinion of the Truſtees, would do credit to any inſtitution of the kind, and is exceeded by none in the city.

On the whole they exhibit an example of ſucceſsful induſtry, highly honorable to themſelves, gratifying to their parents, encouraging to their patrons and conſoling to humanity. Mean while the ſpirit of improvement has diffuſed itſelf among many of their color, who have attained to years of maturity, without the benefits of inſtruction. An evening ſchool under the patronage of the Board of Truſtees, but not at the expenſe of the ſociety, has been inſtituted

They may make any regulations which they may deem neceſſary for the due government of the ſchool, and direct the courſe of ſtudies and diſcipline therein. They may inſtitute, at the expenſe of the ſociety, ſuch premiums as they may judge proper for the encouragement of the ſcholars in their learning; provided they do not exceed the ſum of ſix pounds in one year. They have power to regulate the admiſſion of ſcholars, and to aſſeſs ſuch taxes as they may think reaſonable and neceſſary on the parents, guardians and maſters of the ſcholars; regular liſts of which aſſeſſments are to be tranſmitted by them to the Regiſter, who is to record the ſame and deliver an atteſted copy thereof to the Treaſurer, who is to collect the ſeveral ſums aſſeſſed of the perſons in ſuch liſts named.

4. It is the duty of the Truſtees to viſit the ſchool once in every month; to examine the ſcholars as to their proficiency and conduct, and to cauſe to be made a written report of the ſtate of the ſchool and of their proceedings, to every ſtated meeting of the ſociety; and to give any further information reſpecting the ſchool and the objects of their appointment, which they may judge neceſſary.

5. The Chairman ſhall preſide at all meetings of the Truſtees, and preſerve order therein, and ſhall have a caſting vote and no other. He may call ſpecial meetings whenever he ſhall think proper, or whenever requeſted by any two of the Truſtees. He is to ſign all reports and other official acts of the board.

6 The Secretary is to keep fair and regular minutes of the proceedings of the Truſtees, to give notice to the Truſtees of the times and places of meeting, and, under the direction and with the aſſiſtance of the Chairman, to prepare all reports to the ſociety.

inſtituted the laſt winter; this ſchool which is conducted by the maſter and uſher of the ſociety ſchool, for [illegible] own emolument, is ſupported by the pupils, who amount to forty four, of both ſexes, and themſelves defray the charges of their education. Hitherto a degree of decorum and induſtry has prevailed among them much to their honor and advantage; and it will no doubt be gratifying to the Convention to learn that the uſher in either ſchool, is himſelf of African deſcent, and diſcharges the duties of his office with a zeal, fidelity and ſucceſs, worthy of his character as a man, and his profeſſion as a Chriſtian.

Pennſylvania Society.

EARLY in the year 1793, the committee of the Abolition Society, for improving the condition of the free blacks,* purchaſed

* *A plan for improving the condition of the free blacks.*

The buſineſs relative to the free blacks ſhall be tranſacted by a committee of twenty-four perſons, annually elected by ballot, at the meeting of this ſociety in the month called April; and in order to perform the different ſervices with expedition, regularity and energy this committee ſhall reſolve itſelf into the following ſub-committees, *viz.*

I. *A Committee of Inſpection*, who ſhall ſuperintend the morals, general conduct and ordinary ſituation of the free negroes, and afford them advice and inſtruction, protection from wrongs and other friendly offices.

II. *A Committee of Guardians*, who ſhall place out children, and young people with ſuitable perſons, that they may (during a moderate time of apprenticeſhip or ſervitude) learn ſome trade or other means of ſubſiſtence. The committee may effect this partly by a perſuaſive influence on parents and the perſons concerned, and partly by co-operating with the laws which are or may be enacted for this and ſimilar purpoſes. In forming contracts on theſe occaſions the committee ſhall ſecure to the ſociety ſo far as may be practicable, the right of guardianſhip over the perſons ſo bound.

III. *A Committee of Education*, who ſhall ſuperintend the ſchool inſtruction of the children and youth of the free blacks; they may either influence them to attend regularly the ſchools already eſtabliſhed in this city, or form others with this view; they ſhall, in either caſe provide, that the pupils may receive ſuch learning as is neceſſary for their future ſituation in life, eſpecially a deep impreſſion of the moſt important and generally acknowledged moral and religious principles. They ſhall alſo procure and preſerve a regular record of the marriages, births and manumiſſions of all free blacks.

IV. *A Committee of Employ*, who ſhall endeavour to procure conſtant employment for thoſe free negroes who are able to work; as the want of

purchaſed on a ground rent of fifteen pounds per annum, a lot of ground ſituate on the north ſide of Cherry ſtreet, between Sixth and Seventh ſtreets, on which they ſoon after placed a frame building and opened a free ſchool for the inſtruction of children of color of both ſexes; in this ſchool are taught, ſpelling, reading, and needle work. Eleanor Harris, a black woman, being judged well qualified, has been employed as their teacher ſince the opening of the ſchool. Her ſalary is one hundred dollars per annum; ſhe is alſo provided with a dwelling in the houſe, and with fire wood. The children are furniſhed with the neceſſary ſchool books. The expenſes of this ſchool are defrayed out of the particular funds of this committee, raiſed by donations, legacies and annual ſubſcriptions. The ſchool is regularly viſited every month by the committee of education. The number of ſcholars who generally attend is thirty.

With a view further to extend the benefits of education to the Africans and their deſcendants, the above named committee for improving the condition of the free blacks, have lately procured additional contributions, ſuppoſed ſufficient to enable them to eſtabliſh two more ſchools, which it is expected will ſhortly be opened, one in the northern, and the other in the ſouthern part of the city.

The committee for improving the condition of the free blacks have alſo afforded pecuniary aſſiſtance to a ſociety of young

this would occaſion poverty, idleneſs and many vicious habits. The committee will by ſedulous inquiry be enabled to find common labour for a great number; they will alſo provide that ſuch as indicate proper talents may learn various trades, which may be done by prevailing upon them to bind themſelves for ſuch a term of years as ſhall compenſate their maſters for the expenſe and trouble of inſtruction and maintenance. The committee may attempt the inſtitution of ſome uſeful and ſimple manufactures, which require but little ſkill, and alſo may aſſiſt in commencing buſineſs, ſuch as appear to be qualified for it.

Whenever the committee of inſpection ſhall find perſons of any particular deſcription requiring attention, they ſhall immediately direct them to that committee of whoſe care they are the proper objects.

In matters of a mixed nature the committees ſhall confer, and if neceſſary, act in concert: Affairs of great importance ſhall be referred to the whole committee.

The expenſe incurred by the proſecution of this plan, ſhall be defrayed by a fund to be formed by donations or ſubſcriptions for theſe particular purpoſes, and to be kept ſeparate from the other funds of this ſociety. The committee ſhall make a report of their proceedings and of the ſtate of their ſtock, to the ſociety at their quarterly meetings in the months called April and October.

young men, chiefly members of the Abolition Society, who have kept an evening ſchool ſince the year 1787, for the inſtruction of black men, in reading, writing and arithmetic, during the fall and winter months. A ſchool room was furniſhed them by the overſeers of the ſchool held in Willings alley, hereafter to be mentioned; they have generally employed a maſter, and have themſelves ſerved alternately as his aſſiſtants. The blacks are provided with books, &c. and taught gratis. The expenſe is now defrayed by voluntary contributions of the ſociety of young men. About ſixty ſcholars are at preſent taught in this ſchool. A Firſt-day or Sunday ſchool is kept at this houſe in the ſummer ſeaſon, for the inſtruction of black men in reading and writing, by the ſame ſociety of young men.

Beſides the ſchools more particularly under the care and direction of the ſociety, there are ſeveral others in this city, eſtabliſhed for the improvement of the people of color in various branches of uſeful learning.

In the year 1771, two ſchools for the inſtruction of black children, male and female, were inſtituted by the ſociety of Friends, on a lot of ground belonging to them in Willings-alley—An houſe was built, and the ſchool ſupported by voluntary contributions from the members of that ſociety, until the year 1786, when by a legacy of Anthony Benezet, amounting to a ground rent of ninety pounds per annum, a donation of five hundred pounds ſterling from England, and ſome legacies in this country, all of which were veſted in ground rents, the yearly income of the the ſchool was near two hundred pounds—the ſalaries of the maſter and miſtreſs, expenſe of fire-wood, books and ſtationary, amount to about two hundred and thirty two pounds per annum. The balance is made up by the ſociety of Friends. The teachers live in the houſe, rent free, and are provided with fire-wood—no children of color whether ſlaves or others are refuſed admittance to this ſchool. The average number in each ſchool is about forty ſcholars. Theſe ſchools are under the care of a committee of twelve perſons appointed by the ſociety of Friends, who viſit them regularly once a month.

In the year 1795, a number of young women of this city, formed a ſociety for the purpoſe of teaching black women and girls reading and writing. They have procured a ſchool room, give their perſonal attendance as teachers alternately, provide fire wood, and for thoſe who are not able to procure them, books and ſtationary. The expenſe is defrayed by voluntary contributions—the ſchool

is held in the evening during the fall and winter months—the average number of ſcholars who attend is thirty.

In the winter of 1796, a Firſt-day or Sunday ſchool for the education of the black people in reading and writing was opened by a member of the Abolition Society at the Methodiſt African meeting-houſe in Sixth ſtreet, and held between the hours of public worſhip. From ſixty to ninety perſons, chiefly adults of both ſexes, uſually attended. The original inſtitutor of this ſchool was ſoon afterwards aſſiſted by ſeveral young men, moſtly members of the Abolition Society. The generality of the ſcholars were furniſhed with books gratis; the fund for defraying the neceſſary expenſes was raiſed by contributions ſolicited by the founder, who propoſes in lieu of the day ſchool to keep one in the evening on a ſimilar plan, during the winter ſeaſon.

All the accounts procured of the different ſchools concur in declaring, that the improvement and behaviour of the people of color is encouraging and ſatisfactory.

Alexandria Society.

THE committee appointed for carrying into effect the plan of education adopted by the ſociety, beg leave to make the following report, reſpecting the ſtate, progreſs and proſpect of the ſchool which they have organized in conformity with the aforeſaid plan.*

Your

* *Plan of Education*, Whereas the views of this ſociety are not only to obtain legal juſtice for the oppreſſed Africans and their deſcendants, and to mitigate their ſufferings, but alſo to ameliorate their condition in general as far as may be practicable; as well as that all others in indigent circumſtances, who may appear fit objects of the patronage of the ſociety, may receive benefit therefrom.

The ſociety contemplating theſe objects, and ſenſible that a proper education, directed to the improvement of the mind and the regulation of the heart, is a fruitful ſource of human happineſs, are deſirous that theſe unhappy people may be admitted to a participation of its benefits. But the ſociety being apprehenſive that little opportunity will be afforded them of attending to theſe important advantages during that part of the week allotted to bodily labour. It is therefore reſolved—that for the attainment of this deſirable end, Sunday ſchools be eſtabliſhed in this town, under the patronage and by the direction of the ſociety; on the principles and in manner following:

Your committee having divided themſelves into claſſes, and engaged Benjamin Davis as teacher, for four months, at the rate of ſixty dollars a year, opened ſchool on Sunday the eleventh of December laſt in Archibald M'Lean's ſchool room, on which day they admitted ſeventeen ſcholars: the number has increaſed every ſchool day ſince, and at preſent amounts

A committee of twelve members of the ſociety ſhall be appointed for carrying into effect this reſolution, a majority of whom ſhall conſtitute a quorum.

It ſhall be the duty of ſaid committee when appointed, to procure ſuitable apartments (gratis, if poſſible) for the accommodation of ſcholars to be hereafter admitted, and to employ at the expenſe of the ſociety, compet nt teachers, to take the immediate charge of ſaid ſchools.

In theſe ſeminaries ſhall be taught, orthography, reading, writing and the more uſeful parts of arithmetic; and the morals of the pupils ſhall be carefully attended to.

Theſe ſchools ſhall be open indiſcriminately for the reception of children of indigent parents, whoſe circumſtances in life, exclude them from other means of education, but more eſpecially the children of free blacks and mulattoes, and the ſlaves of all who chooſe to ſend them; alſo, free adults of the aforementioned deſcription who may be thought able to pay, and the children of ſuch ſhall be admitted at a low rate of tuition, and all monies ſo raiſed, ſhall be appropriated to the ſole uſe of ſaid inſtitution.

The committee ſhall be choſen for one year in the ſame manner as other officers—as ſoon as convenient after their election, they ſhall divide themſelves equally into two claſſes, the firſt of which ſhall vacate their places at the end of ſix months, and the ſecond at the end of twelve months; ſo that one half ſhall be choſen every ſix months—and no member who ſhall have ſerved out the regular term of his appointment, ſhall be eligible for the next ſix months—in caſe of vacancies in their own body, they ſhall have power to fill ſuch vacancies till the next election.

The committee ſhall divide themſelves into three claſſes, one of which in rotation ſhall attend ſaid ſchools perſonally every Sabbath day, to inſpect the ſtate of them, ſee that the teachers perform their duty, and for any other purpoſes, which they may conceive calculated to promote the ends of the inſtitution.

Moreover if the committee ſhall not be able as ſoon as requiſite, to procure ſuitable teachers, or if at any time vacancies happen, in either caſe, the committee ſhall themſelves by claſſes, take charge of ſuch ſchool or ſchools as may be deſtitute till it or they can be ſupplied.

The committee ſhall, under the aforeſaid regulations, have a diſcretionary power in the management of ſaid inſtitution; they ſhall have the ſole right of admitting, rejecting and expelling ſcholars, of fixing the hours of commencing and breaking up ſchool: *Provided nevertheleſs*, that the concurrence of two-thirds of the members ſhall be neceſſary for the expulſion of any ſcholar whom they may deem unworthy of the inſtitution; they ſhall meet at leaſt once a month, for the tranſaction of buſineſs, and ſhall at each quarterly meeting of the ſociety, make report of their proceedings, and of the ſtate of the inſtitution.

amounts to one hundred and eight who have been admitted. Of this number ten have attended irregularly and agreeably to a reſolve of the committee paſſed the fourth inſtant, for excluding ſuch as abſent themſelves four ſchool days ſucceſſively without a ſatisfactory excuſe, your committee apprehend moſt of the above mentioned delinquents will vacate their places.

In regard to the advancement of the pupils in learning, your committee ſtate, that they have four who write a very legible hand, read the ſcriptures with a tolerable facility and have commenced arithmetic: eight others are capable of reading the ſcriptures, but have as yet made ſmall advancement in writing: fifteen can ſpell words of three or four ſyllables and read eaſy leſſons: ſome of theſe have been put to writing; the reſidue are chiefly learning the alphabet or to ſpell monoſyllables.

Many of the pupils (eſpecially thoſe of mature age) evince a ſtrong deſire and conſiderable aptitude for learning. Their deportment in general is orderly and reſpectful, and their external appearance very decent.

Your committee feel gratified in having it in their power to report thus favourably of the inſtitution. They flatter themſelves that its effects will be laſtingly beneficial in improving the minds and amending the morals of thoſe for whoſe advantage it was eſtabliſhed.

Your committee cannot diſmiſs the ſubject without earneſtly recommending this infant inſtitution to the vigilant guardianſhip of the ſociety; expreſſing at the ſame time their ſanguine hopes of its ultimate ſucceſs and extenſive utility.

A Table ſhewing the recommendations and requiſitions of the Convention of 1796, *and of former Conventions, and how far they have hitherto been complied with by each Society.*

I. *To ſend delegates to a Convention to meet at Philadelphia in May,* 1797.

New-York ſociety,	complied.
New-Jerſey ſociety,	ditto.
Pennſylvania ſociety,	ditto.
Maryland ſociety, *(at Baltimore)*	ditto.
Choptank ſociety, *(Maryland)*	ditto.
Alexandria ſociety, *(Virginia)*	ditto.
Virginia ſociety, *(at Richmond)*	ditto.

Rhode-Iſland, Connecticut, Waſhington *(Pennſylvania,)* Wilmington *(Delaware,)* Delaware, Cheſter-town *(Maryland,)* Wincheſter *(Virginia,)* and Kentucky ſocieties ſent none.

II. *To tranſmit certified copies of all the laws in the reſpective ſtates relating to ſlavery; as well of thoſe repealed as of thoſe in force.*

Connecticut	tranſmitted in 1795.
New-York,	in 1797.
New-Jerſey,	in 1796.
Pennſylvania,	in 1797.
Maryland,	in 1797.
Virginia and Alexandria.	in 1797, a copy of profeſſor Tucker's diſſertation on ſlavery, which contains the ſubſtance of all the laws of Virginia reſpecting ſlavery from its ſettlement till 1794. Copies of the laws ſince that period alſo ſent.

Rhode-Iſland, Delaware, and Kentucky ſocieties have not yet tranſmitted.

III. *To forward correct liſts of the officers and other members of each reſpective ſociety.*

New-York complied in 1796 and 1797, number of members two hundred and fifty.

New-Jerſey complied partially.

Pennſylvania

Pennſylvania complied in 1797. Members five hundred and ninety-one.
Wilmington complied in 1796. Members about ſixty
Maryland complied in 1797. Members two hundred and thirty one
Choptank complied in 1797. Members twenty-five.
Alexandria complied in 1797. Members ſixty-two.
Virginia complied in 1796 and 1797. Members one dred and forty-ſeven.

Rhode-Iſland, Connecticut, Waſhington, Delaware, Cheſter-town, Wincheſter and Kentucky ſocieties have not yet ſent liſts of their members.

IV. *An account of the proceedings of each ſociety in relieving perſons unlawfully held in bondage.*

New-York. Since January 1796, have had complaints from ninety perſons, Africans or of African deſcent—twenty-nine freed on the law prohibiting importation—ſeven as free born—two unſucceſsful—heavy damages recovered in ſome inſtances—twenty one caſes now in ſuit—nineteen under conſideration.

New-Jerſey ſociety. Many manumiſſions have been effected ſince January 1796, but no preciſe information is yet received to what number and under what circumſtances.

Pennſylvania ſociety. It appears from the minutes of the acting committee of the ſociety, that many hundreds of Africans have been liberated through their aid ſince the inſtitution of the ſociety.

Wilmington ſociety. Has ſent a liſt of perſons liberated by their agency up to 1796, amounting to eighty ſince 1788.

Maryland ſociety at Baltimore. A variety of ſuits were inſtituted againſt the unlawful holders of ſlaves laſt year, and in conſequence many have been liberated—there are ſeveral ſuits now pending in law, which are expected to have the like favorable iſſue.

Choptank ſociety. This ſociety has exerted itſelf in favor of the Africans, for ſeven years; and been the inſtrument of liberating more than ſixty individuals, and has failed but in a ſingle application to a court of juſtice in their behalf.

Alexandria

Alexandria ſociety. Twenty-ſix complaints made to the ſociety—ſix perſons relieved on the law againſt importation; five will probably be relieved, the other fourteen caſes on which as well as on the above five ſuits are pending are doubtful. A ſuit in Norfolk court and one in North Carolina now carrying on at the expenſe of this ſociety.

Virginia ſociety. Nothing of material importance ſince the convention of 1796. Suits commenced before now pending in behalf of between twenty and thirty perſons.

Rhode-Iſland, Connecticut, Waſhington, Delaware, Cheſter-town, Wincheſter, and Kentucky ſocieties ſent no account.

V. *A ſtatement of the condition of the blacks in each ſtate both bond and free, with reſpect to the property of the free, and the employment and moral conduct of all.*

New-York. The number of people of color in the ſtate of New-York not known—exceeds two thouſand—in the city names of one thouſand collected—of theſe more than half are free, employed as ſervants, labourers, ſailors, mechanics, &c.—a few are ſmall traders—condition tolerable—many in town and country freeholders—ſeveral worth from three hundred to thirteen hundred dollars—various aſſociations among the free blacks for mutual ſupport, benefit and improvement—one has a lot for a burying ground and the ſcite of a church worth fifteen hundred dollars.

In a ſtate of progreſſive improvement.

New-Jerſey. Condition, as to enjoyments of life and reſpectability, much the ſame as in New-York.

Pennſylvania. Complied with in 1796. See the minutes of the convention of that year—page 20 and 21.

Maryland at Baltimore & Choptank The condition of the blacks from the information this ſociety has received is greatly ameliorated, and ſome few of the free are enabled to provide for themſelves without manual labor—moral conduct equal to that of the whites in like circumſtances—minute information not yet obtained.

Alexandria.

Alexandria. Generally ſlaves—their treatment leſs rigorous than formerly—moral conduct of the free generally good—as labourers preferred to the whites.

From Rhode Iſland, Connecticut, Waſhington, Wilmington, Delaware, Cheſter town, Virginia, Wincheſter and Kentucky ſocieties—none ſent.

VI. *Reports of trials and adjudications relative to Africans.*

New-York. None ever preſerved in this ſtate.

New-Jerſey. Sent in 1796.

Pennſylvania. None have been preſerved by the ſociety, but ſome have been publiſhed and others are now pr paring for publication.

Rhode-Iſland, Connecticut, Waſhington, Wilmington, Delaware, Maryland, Cheſter-town, Choptank, Alexandria, Virginia, Wincheſter and Kentucky ſocieties—ſent none.

VII. *Endeavours uſed to obtain a repeal or amelioration of the laws reſpecting ſlavery.*

New-York. A bill for the gradual abolition of ſlavery brought into the Legiſlature at their laſt ſeſſion, but poſtponed till the next ſeſſion.

New-Jerſey. A bill brought into the laſt ſeſſion of the Legiſlature for a gradual abolition of ſlavery which is poſtponed to the next ſeſſion as in New-York.

Pennſylvania. A bill for the total abolition of ſlavery was brought into and read in the Houſe of Repreſentatives near the cloſe of the laſt ſeſſion of the Legiſlature, but lies over to the next ſeſſion.

Maryland at Baltimore. No attempt has been made ſince the Convention of 1796.

Alexandria. Have drawn up and mean to preſent to the next Legiſlature, a remonſtrance againſt a late law of the ſtate which is peculiarly ſevere againſt Africans.

Rhode-Iſland, Connecticut, Waſhington, Wilmington, Delaware, Cheſter-town, Choptank, Virginia, Wincheſter, and Kentucky ſocieties tranſmitted no information.

VIII.

VII. *The progress made in extending to Africans the benefits of inſtruction.*

New-York. Houſe and lot for a ſchool purchaſed by the ſociety ſince January 1796—ſchool has exiſted many years—more flouriſhing now than ever—property of the ſociety for its accommodation worth upwards of three thouſand five hundred dollars—annual expenſe of the ſchool one thouſand dollars—has a maſter, uſher and miſtreſs—ſcholars taught reading, penmanſhip, arithmetic, Engliſh grammar and geography—girls (additionally) needle work—number one hundred and twenty-two—boys ſixty-three—girls fifty-nine—improve faſt and behave as well as any other children—evening ſchool in the winter for free blacks, adults—taught by the maſter and uſher of the ſociety's ſchool—number, forty-four—uſher a black man.

New-Jerſey. Nothing done by the ſociety—a bill is now pending before the Legiſlature providing for the inſtruction of all children in the ſtate, which, if carried, will include the Africans as well as the whites.

Pennſylvania. Within the city and liberties of Philadelphia there are at preſent ſeven ſchools for the education of people of color; at which perhaps near three hundred ſcholars of both ſexes uſually attend—two other ſchools are about to be opened for the ſame purpoſe.

Maryland at Baltimore. Several children of Africans and other people of color now under a courſe of inſtruction—an academy (of which notice was given to the laſt convention) will be opened the enſuing ſeaſon, and ſuitable teachers provided.

Alexandria. A Sunday ſchool opened by this ſociety in December, 1795, for the reception of Africans and their deſcendants—the number of ſcholars who uſually attend is one hundred and eight—they are inſtructed in reading, penmanſhip and arithmetic.

From Rhode Iſland, Connecticut, Waſhington, Wilmington, Delaware, Cheſter-town, Choptank, Virginia, Winchester, and Kentucky ſocieties—no information received.

IX. *To eſtabliſh periodical diſcourſes on the ſubject of ſlavery and the means of its abolition.*

Connecticut. No information this year—there have been ſeven or eight diſcourſes delivered before the ſociety, the greater part of which have been printed and circulated extenſively.

New-York. The firſt aunual diſcourſe delivered before this ſociety the twelfth of April, 1797

Pennſylvania. Not deemed neceſſary in this ſtate, where the general ſentiments of the people are, in a great degree, congenial with thoſe of the ſociety.

Maryland. Complied with.

Rhode-Iſland, New Jerſey, Waſhington, Wilmington, Delaware, Cheſter town, Choptank, Alexandria, Virginia, Winchester, and Kentucky ſocieties tranſmitted no information on the ſubject.

X. *To keep accurate regiſters of all deeds of manumiſſion executed within the precincts of each ſociety.*

New York. Attended to by this ſociety from the firſt, ſo far as depended on itſelf.

Pennſylvania. A regiſter of manumiſſions kept by the acting committee.

Maryland at Baltimore, and Choptank. The ſociety preſerve a regiſter—and all manumiſſions are matter of record in the county courts.

Alexandria. A regiſter is kept by the ſociety, manumiſſions are recorded in the court of Common Pleas.

Virginia. Deeds of emancipation are recorded in the county courts.

From Rhode Iſland, Connecticut, New-Jerſey, Waſhington, Wilmington, Delaware, Cheſter-town, Winchester and Kentucky ſocieties—no information.

XI. *To diſtribute ſuitable publications tending to promote the deſign of the inſtitutions.*

New-York. Attended to partially.

New-Jerſey. Attended to generally.

Pennſylvania Faithfully attended to.

Alexandria. Attended to, and a new publication is ſoon to be made on the ſubject of ſlavery.

From Rhode-Iſland, Connecticut, Waſhington, Wilmington, Delaware, Maryland, Cheſter town, Choptank, Virginia, Winchester and Kentucky ſocieties—no information.

XII.

XII. *To endeavour to free negroes from St. Domingo retained here as ſlaves, contrary to the decree of the National Convention of France.*

Pennſylvania. Acted on as caſes have occurred—from the other ſocieties—no information.

XIII. *To diſcourage the uſe of articles manufactured by ſlaves.*

No particular meaſures on this ſubject are repreſented as being adopted by any of the ſocieties.

XIV. *To diſtribute the addreſs to the free people of color from the convention of* 1796.

New-York, New-Jerſey, Pennſylvania, Maryland, and Alexandria ſocieties—done.

Choptank ſociety. Not received till late by this ſociety.

Virginia ſociety. Done in part.

From Rhode-Iſland, Connecticut Waſhington, Wilmington, Delaware, Cheſter-town, Winchester and Kentucky ſocieties—no information.

XV. *To ſend copies of the conſtitutions of the reſpective ſocieties.*

Connecticut. Sent.
New-York. Sent the original in 1796, and the reviſed one in 1797.
New-Jerſey. Sent in 1796.
Pennſylvania. ditto.
Wilmington. ditto.
Maryland. ditto.
Alexandria. Sent 1797.
Virginia. Sent 1796.

Rhode-Iſland, Waſhington, Delaware, Cheſter town, Choptank, Winchester and Kentucky ſocieties ſent none.

The following abſtracts of the exiſting laws reſpecting ſlavery in the States of Connecticut, New-York, New-Jerſey Pennſylvania, Maryland and Virginia are publiſhed for general information—The inconſiſtency of ſeveral of theſe laws ariſes from the nature of the ſubject, and though much care has been taken to make theſe abſtracts plain and intelligible, yet we do not ſuppoſe we have fully ſucceeded in this firſt eſſay. We hope that fuller documents and more conſiſtent laws, will enable future Conventions to perform this taſk with greater perſpicuity and uſefulneſs.

By the exiſting laws of Connecticut:

Any negro, molatto, or indian ſervant or ſlave, who ſhall be found wandering out of the bounds of the place to which he belongs, without a paſs from a magiſtrate or from his owner, ſhall be treated as a runaway, and citizens are impowered to ſecure ſuch perſons and bring them before the magiſtrate, the owner being liable for all charges accruing thereby.

Ferry men are required not to ſuffer ſuch perſons to paſs their ferries under penalty of twenty ſhillings for each offence, to the owner; and if free negroes ſhall travel without ſuch certificate, and be ſtopped or taken up, they ſhall pay all charges arising thereby.

Any perſon preſuming to buy or receive from an indian, mulatto or negro ſervant or ſlave, any money or goods without order from the owner, ſhall be ſentenced to reſtore all ſuch articles and alſo forfeit double the value thereof, and treble, if the article is not to be obtained: and if the perſon ſo offending do not make reſtitution as awarded, then to be publicly whipt, not exceeding twenty ſtripes, or make ſatisfaction by ſervice. And any indian, negro or molatto ſervant or ſlave, ſo depoſiting or ſelling ſuch articles or money, if it appear they were ſtolen, or that ſhall ſteal any money or goods and ſhall be convicted, (although the buyer or receiver be not found) ſhall be whipt, not exceeding thirty ſtripes, and the things ſtolen if found, returned to the party injured, or the value if not found.

Any ſervant or ſlave, as above, if found from home after nine o'clock at night, may be taken before a magiſtrate, who may order him or her to be whipt on the naked body,

not

not exceeding ten ſtripes, and pay coſt of court, unleſs redeemed by the maſter's paying a fine not exceeding ten ſhillings: and any perſon entertaining or tolerating any ſuch perſons in his houſe after ſuch hour, ſhall forfeit ten ſhillings.

No ſlave ſhall be imported into this ſtate to be left or ſold, under the penalty of one hundred pounds.

Any perſon manumitting a ſlave is liable to the maintenance of ſuch ſlave; and the ſame as to negro, molatto and Spaniſh indian ſervants for time, whoſe time is expired, except a certificate be procured from the ſelect men empowering ſuch liberation, which they are empowered to grant if to a majority of them it appears that ſuch ſlave or ſervant, is able to ſupport himſelf and is of good and peaceable life and converſation.

No negro or molatto child, born after the firſt day of March one thouſad ſeven hundred and eighty-four, ſhall be held in ſervitude after attaining the age of twenty-five years.

No citizen or reſident of this ſtate, ſhall import or tranſport or buy or ſell or receive on board his or her veſſel, with intent to cauſe to be imported or tranſported, any of the inhabitants of any country in Africa, as ſlaves, or ſervants for term of years: upon penalty of fifty pounds for each perſon ſo imported or tranſported, and of five hundred pounds for every veſſel employed in ſuch importation or tranſportation; and all inſurance on veſſels ſo employed, or ſlaves or ſervants ſo ſhipped is void.

Any perſon who ſhall kidnap, decoy or forcibly carry off, out of this ſtate any free negro, indian or molatto or any perſon entitled to freedom at the age of twenty-five years, or ſhall aid or aſſiſt therein, being duly convicted, ſhall forfeit one hundred pounds, and in addition, ſuch ſum in damages as the court ſhall determine: *Provided* that nothing in this act ſhall operate to prevent perſons removing out of this ſtate, for the purpoſe of reſidence, from carrying or tranſporting with them ſuch negroes or molattoes as belong to them, or to prevent perſons living within this ſtate, from directing their ſervants out of this ſtate about their ordinary and neceſſary buſineſs.

Any owner, maſter or factor of any veſſel clearing out for the coaſt of Africa, or ſuſpected by any citizen of this ſtate, to be intended for the ſlave trade in any part of the world, may on declaration of ſuch ſuſpicion, made on oath to the naval officer, to his ſatisfaction, be required to give bond in one thouſand pounds that none of the natives of Africa, or any other foreign country, ſhall be taken on board ſuch veſſel,

veſſel, during her voyage, with intent to be tranſported as ſlaves to any other part of the world.

All perſons are required to give in to the Town Clerk of the place where they reſide, on oath, the names of ſuch children as are or ſhall be in their poſſeſſion, as are entitled to freedom at the age of twenty-five years, under penalty of forty ſhillings for every month's neglect, after the time fixed by this act.

No perſon ſhall tranſport or aſſiſt in tranſporting for the purpoſe of ſelling, out of this ſtate, any negro or mulatto ſlave or ſervant for time, upon penalty of one hundred pounds. And all notes, bonds, mortgages or ſecurities given in payment for perſons ſo tranſported, are made void.

If any owner of a ſlave ſhall make application to any two of the civil authority, or one of the civil authority and two ſelect men of the town to which he belongs, for the purpoſe of manumitting his ſlave, it ſhall be the duty of ſaid authority if the ſlave is found to be in good health, and not more than forty-five years of age or leſs than twenty-five years, to give to the owner a certificate thereof under their hands: *Provided* the ſlave is deſirous of being made free, and this certificate enables the owner to manumit the ſlave, without incurring any riſque of after maintaining him.

By the act of the Legiſlature of the ſtate of New-York, paſſed the twenty-ſecond of February 1788, *and which comprizes all the laws reſpecting ſlaves, it is enacted:*

That every negro, mulatto or muſtee, within the ſtate, who at the time of the paſſing the act, was a ſlave for life, ſhall continue ſuch unleſs manumitted, in the manner preſcribed by the act, or ſet free by ſome future law of the ſtate; and the children of ſuch perſon ſhall follow the condition of the mother, and be adjudged ſlaves. The baptizing of a ſlave is declared not to be a manumiſſion of ſuch ſlave.

Slaves under fifty years of age may be manumitted, by the owners of them, on procuring a certificate from the overſeers of the poor, or two juſtices of the peace, or the Mayor or Recorder and two Aldermen, that ſuch ſlaves appear

pear to be under fifty years of age, and of fufficient ability to maintain themſelves, and having ſuch certificate regiſtered with the Clerk of the city, county or town, where the owner of ſuch ſlave reſide; without being obliged to give ſecurity to indemnify ſuch city, town or place, or to maintain them after ſuch ſlaves have become helpleſs through old age or infirmity. Slaves may, in like manner, be manumitted by will, if the executors procure ſuch certificate.

Or they may be manumitted at any age without ſuch certificate, provided the owner or the executors or any teſtator, or any other perſon, in behalf of the ſlave, will give ſecurity at the ſeſſions, or enter into a bond to the ſtate, to ſave harmleſs the city, town or place, from the charge of any ſuch ſlave. And, even if any ſuch perſon is manumitted by laſt will, or otherwiſe, and no certificate be attained or ſecurity given, yet ſuch ſlave ſhall be conſidered as freed from the owner or his executors, adminiſtrators or aſſigns, and he or they ſhall be liable to maintain them when they become helpleſs and unable to maintain themſelves. If the overſeers of the poor ſhall refuſe to give the certificate as abovementioned, the owner may appeal to the Quarter Seſſions, who are authorized to grant the certificate.

No perſon can ſell ſlaves to another who is unable to maintain them, under the penalty of twenty pounds; and ſhall ſtill be deemed owner of ſuch ſlaves.

Any ſlave ſtriking a white perſon may be committed by a Juſtice of the Peace, and be tried and ſuffer the puniſhment inflicted for *petit larceny*.

In all capital caſes, negroes or other ſlaves, ſhall have the privilege of a trial by jury.

Slaves convicted of any crime, under a capital offence, may on the requeſt of the owner, and at the diſcretion of the court, be tranſported out of the ſtate. Slaves are not admitted as witneſſes in any cauſe whatever for or againſt any perſon, except that in criminal caſes, their evidence may be taken for, or againſt, each other.

All contracts made with ſlaves, without conſent of their owners, are void. The owners of ſlaves are liable for their treſpaſſes to the value of five pounds.

No perſon ſhall harbour a runaway ſlave, or trade with a ſlave without conſent of the owner, under the penalty of five pounds.

To prevent the further importation of ſlaves into the ſtate, it is enacted—That any perſon who ſhall ſell, or

have

ſlave, within this ſtate, any negro or other perſon, who has been imported or brought into the ſtate ſince the firſt of June, 1785, or ſince the paſſing of the act ſhall be deemed guilty of a public offence, and forfeit one hundred pounds, to be recovered by action of debt with coſts of ſuit, one half to the Treaſurer of the ſtate, and the other half to the perſon ſuing for the ſame—and every ſuch perſon, ſo brought into the ſtate and ſold, is declared to be free—and if any perſon ſhall buy, or, as an agent, ſhall receive any ſlave, with an intent to export or carry ſuch ſlave out of the ſtate to be ſold, ſuch perſon or agent, ſhall, in like manner be deemed guilty of a public offence, and forfeit the ſum of one hundred pounds; and ſuch ſlave, immediately after he ſhall be ſo purchaſed, taken, or received, is declared to be free.

Abſtracts of New-Jerſey laws reſpecting ſlaves, &c.

The act paſſed the twentieth of October, 1694, prohibits the permitting any ſlave to carry any gun or piſtol, or take any dog with him into the woods or plantations, unleſs accompanied by his owner or ſome other white perſon by order of his owner, under the penalty of twenty ſhillings for the firſt offence, and thirty ſhillings for the ſecond, and ten ſhillings more for every offence after; to be recovered of the owner—Inflicts a penalty on ſuffering ſlaves to keep any ſwine without the owners mark, and provides that any perſon lending to any ſlave a piſtol or gun, ſhall forfeit the ſame or twenty ſhillings to the owner of the ſaid ſlave.

The act paſſed March ſeventeenth, 1713, prohibits the trafficking with any negro, indian or molatto ſlave, without the conſent of the owner or other perſon having the care of ſuch ſlave, under the penalty of twenty ſhillings for the firſt offence, and forty ſhillings for the ſecond and every other offence, and authorizes the taking up and whipping any ſlave that may be found five miles from his maſter or miſtreſſes habitation, or that may come out of any other province into New-Jerſey, unleſs ſuch ſlave have leave in writing from his maſter or miſtreſs, or is known to be on his or her buſineſs.

The twelfth ſection of the ſame act preſcribes the penalty of forty ſhillings for every time that any perſon ſhall harbour or entertain the ſlave of another without the conſent of the maſter or miſtreſs, excepting in diſtreſs of weather or other extraordinary occaſion, and if any perſon ſhall harbour, conceal, or aſſiſt in carrying away any ſlave who ſhall

ſhall happen to be loſt, die, or be otherwiſe rendered unſerviceable, he ſhall pay the value of ſuch ſlave to the owner.

The thirteenth ſection provides, that no negro, indian or mulatto, who ſhall thereafter be made free, ſhall hold or poſſeſs any houſes, lands, tenements or hereditaments in his own right, in fee ſimple or fee tail.

The firſt ſection of an act paſſed October twenty third, 1771, authorizes any Juſtice of the peace, on application to him made by the maſter of any ſervant or ſlave, to cauſe to be brought before him any perſon who may be ſuſpected of having ſold any ſtrong liquor to ſuch ſlave or ſervant without his maſter's conſent, and to tender an oath or affirmation that he has not ſo done, and his refuſal to take the ſaid oath or affirmation ſhall be ſufficient evidence to convict him thereof.

The ſecond and third ſections provide, that if more than five negro or molatto ſlaves ſhall meet and aſſemble together, (unleſs on their maſter or miſtreſſes buſineſs) they ſhall be apprehended and whipped, and if any negro or molatto ſlave ſhall be ſeen from his maſter's houſe after nine o'clock at night, except on his maſter or miſtreſſes buſineſs, or ſhall be ſeen to hunt or carry a gun on the Lord's day, he ſhall be taken before a Juſtice of the peace and whipped; but nothing in the ſaid act ſhall be conſtrued to prevent any negro or molatto ſlave from going to church or meeting, and attending on divine ſervice or from burying their dead with their maſter or miſtreſſes conſent.

A law paſſed March the ſecond, 1786.

Section I, Inflicts a penalty of fifty pounds for bringing a ſlave into the ſtate imported from Africa ſince 1776.

Section II, Inflicts a penalty of twenty pounds for bringing a ſlave into the ſtate though not imported ſince 1776.

Section III, Exempts from the above penalty perſons coming into the ſtate to ſettle, and ſtrangers making a temporary ſtay, provided the ſlaves they bring have not been imported from Africa ſince the year 1776, which ſlaves are not to be ſold in the ſtate.

Section IV, Gives ſuch penalties to the uſe of the ſtate.

Section V, Authorizes the manumiſſion of ſound and rational ſlaves between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-five years, by writing under hand and ſeal, under the inſpection of two Overſeers of the poor and two Juſtices of the peace,

who are to certify the ſame, and gives the form of ſuch certificate, which ſhall exempt the maſter's eſtate from maintaining the ſlave ſo freed if he or ſhe, at a future time becomes chargable, and orders the manumiſſion and certificate to be recorded in the office of the Clerk of the county.

Section VI, Gives the ſlave ſo ſet free, a legal ſettlement in the townſhip wherein the maſter or miſtreſs had a ſettlement when the ſlave was thus emancipated, and any poſſeſſion, duty, employment or paying tax, ſhall not give a ſettlement elſewhere.

Section VIII, Authorizes grand juries to take cognizance of inhuman treatment or abuſe of ſlaves permitting the Court to fine the perpetrator, not exceeding five pounds for the firſt offence and ten pounds for the ſecond, giving the penalty to the townſhip.

Section IX, Prohibits ſlaves freed in another ſtate, from travelling in this ſtate, and inflicts a penalty of five pounds per week on any perſon concealing, employing or permitting ſuch to live in their houſe or on their land, nor may a ſlave freed in Jerſey, travel out of the townſhip or county wherein he was manumitted, without a certificate of his freedom, ſigned by two Juſtices and counterſigned by the county Clerk under ſeal of the county Court.

A law paſſed November the twenty-ſixth, 1788.

Section I, Forfeits the veſſel, appurtenances and cargo, if fitted out for the ſlave trade.

Section II, Gives of ſuch forfeiture, $\frac{7}{8}$ to the ſtate and $\frac{1}{8}$ to the proſecutor.

Section III, Inflicts a penalty of fifty pounds on maſters of veſſels, ſeamen or other perſons for attempting to reſiſt, when about to be ſeized under this law.

Section VI, Provides that no ſlave that has reſided one year laſt paſt in the ſtate, ſhall be removed out with a deſign thereby of changing his or her place of abode if of full age, without the conſent of ſuch ſlave, teſtified on private examination before a Juſtice of the peace, and if under the age of twenty-one years conſent as aboveſaid, together with the conſent, alſo, of parents if ſuch minor hath any, the Juſtice to make a record of ſuch conſent and give ſuch ſlave a copy thereof, with the name, age, former place of abode, the reaſon of ſuch removal and the name of the place to which he or ſhe is about to go; and any perſon removing or aiding, or abetting the removal of a ſlave contrary to this

this act, ſhall forfeit and pay twenty pounds for every ſuch offence, half the penalty to the proſecutor and half to the poor. But this act is not to be conſtrued to hinder a maſter or miſtreſs who ſhall remove to and reſide in another ſtate, from taking his or her ſlave or ſlaves with him or her.

Section V, Puts negro and molatto ſlaves or free perſons on the ſame footing with regard to trials and puniſhments, in all criminal caſes with white people.

Section VI, Obliges maſters and miſtreſſes, to teach all negro and molatto ſlaves and ſervants to read, while under the age of twenty-one years, and for refuſal or neglect, inflicts a penalty of five pounds.

Abſtracts of the exiſting laws of Pennſylvania.

No perſon born in this ſtate ſince the firſt of March, 1780, ſhall be conſidered as a ſlave or ſervant for life.

Negro or molatto children born of ſlaves are to ſerve till the age of twenty-eight years, and to be entitled to ſimilar treatment and freedoms with white ſervants.

Slaves not duly regiſtered before the firſt of November, 1780, or in caſe of run-aways or thoſe employed abroad as ſeamen within five years after that date, are to be conſidered as free—The maſters to be liable to the Overſeers of the poor, where ſuch negro or molatto ſhall become chargable, unleſs regularly manumitted before the age of twenty-eight years.

Trials of negroes and molattoes ſhall be the ſame as of other perſons—but the evidence of a ſlave ſhall not be admitted againſt a freeman.

When ſentence of death is executed againſt a ſlave, the maſter ſhall be indemnified for the loſs.

Slaves brought into this ſtate from other ſtates or nations, except the domeſtic ſlaves of Members of Congreſs, of foreign Miniſters and Conſuls, of perſons paſſing through or ſojourning but not becoming reſidents, and ſeamen in veſſels not belonging to any inhabitant of this ſtate; and (except in the caſe of Members of Congreſs, foreign Miniſters and Conſuls) not retained in the ſtate more than ſix months, ſhall be deemed free—but no ſhelter or relief from this act ſhall be given to run-aways from ſlavery or ſervitude.

No covenant of ſervitude or apprenticeſhip, ſhall be valid for more than ſeven years, or if under twenty-one when bound, till the age of twenty-eight years.

No negro or molatto ſlave or ſervant for a term of years, ſhall be removed out of the ſtate for the purpoſe of changing reſidence or otherwiſe fruſtrating the good intention of this law, without the conſent, legally obtained, of ſuch ſlave or ſervant; nor ſhall any perſon ſell or diſpoſe of any ſuch ſlave or ſervant to any perſon out of the ſtate—penalty ſeventy-five pounds.

Children born of ſlaves, to be duly regiſtered within ſix months after birth—otherwiſe the maſter to loſe all right to the ſervice of ſuch children.

No veſſel ſhall be fitted out from any port in this ſtate, for the purpoſe of carrying on a trade or traffic in ſlaves, under the penalty of forfeiting ſaid veſſel; and every perſon concerned in thus fitting out, aiding or abetting, ſhall pay a penalty of one thouſand pounds.

Huſband and wife, parent and child, in a ſtate of ſlavery or ſervitude for a term of years, ſhall not be ſeparated to a greater diſtance than ten miles, for the purpoſe of changing the place of abode, without the conſent of ſuch huſband or wife legally obtained; or, in the caſe of a child, that it be above the age of four years—penalty fifty pounds.

For kidnapping, or by fraud, force or violence, carrying away any negro or molatto out of this ſtate, a penalty of one hundred pounds, and confinement to hard labor from ſix to twelve months.

By the exiſting laws of Maryland,

Slaves imported or brought into the ſtate either for ſale or to reſide, ceaſe to be the property of the perſon importing or bringing them in and become free, except ſuch perſon be a citizen of the United States, coming with a bona fide intention to reſide and bring ſuch perſons with him as his property, on his removal or within a year after, ſuch ſlaves or their mother having been previouſly reſident for three years in ſome of the United States.

A citizen of this ſtate, owning land and ſlaves employed thereon in an adjoining ſtate, may bring them for his own uſe but not for ſale; provided the ſlaves or their ancestors were reſident in ſuch adjoining ſtate before the twenty-firſt of April, 1783, and a liſt of ſuch ſlaves be filed with the Clerk of the county within three months in the form preſcribed by law. This privilege is alſo granted to a citizen of another ſtate owning land in this ſtate, to citizens of this, acquiring property in ſlaves in another ſtate, and to citizens of another ſtate acquiring property in them in this ſtate by marriage, bequeſt, diſtribution or as guardians, who may reſpectively bring in or carry out ſuch ſlaves.

A negro or other ſlave carried out of the ſtate by an executor, adminiſtrator or guardian, may be brought in again by the owner or proprietor.

No perſon can diſpoſe of ſlaves imported or brought in, or their increaſe, unleſs he ſhall have been reſident in the ſtate for three years preceding ſuch ſale, except by laſt will and teſtament, or for the payment of bona fide debts, or in caſe of inteſtacy.

Citizens of France ſeeking an aſylum in this ſtate and becoming reſident therein, may hold their ſlaves; provided that thoſe of a maſter of a family do not exceed five, and thoſe of a ſingle man three in number, and that a liſt of them be recorded with the Clerk of the county. They are not permitted to ſell them in the ſtate, and if a greater number than the law permits are brought in, they muſt be re-ſhipped within a year or they become free.

Perſons brought into this ſtate from any of the United States, and bound to ſervice for a term of years by the laws of the ſtate from which they are brought, ſhall ſerve no longer than ſuch laws oblige them.

Any perſon forcibly or fraudulently tranſporting or carrying out of the ſtate or bringing therein any free negro or mulatto, knowing them to be free or entitled to freedom at a certain age, and ſelling them for life or for a longer term than they are bound to ſerve by law, forfeits eight hundred dollars for every ſuch offence, and in caſe of inability to pay, is to be adjudged to labor on the public roads for a period not exceeding five years.

Healthy ſlaves may be manumitted by writing under hand and ſeal, executed in preſence of two witneſſes or by laſt will and teſtament, provided ſuch ſlaves be under forty-five years of age and it be not in prejudice of creditors. Such manumiſſion muſt be recorded, and a copy of the record is received as good evidence.

No petitions for freedom are to originate in the General Court, but muſt be preferred in the Court of the county where the petitioner reſides, and at the inſtance of either party, a trial by jury may be had, upon which, either may challenge peremptorily, twelve jurors: no appeal is allowed from the judgment of ſuch Court, except on matters of law.

The attorney of any petitioner for freedom, is liable for all coſts in caſe of the diſmiſſal of the petition, unleſs the Court under all the circumſtances are of opinion that there were probable grounds, and no new petition can be preferred until the coſts of a former are paid.

Any perſon convicted of giving a paſs to a ſlave or ſervant or aſſiſting by advice or donation or loan the tranſporting of any ſuch ſlave or ſervant, or by other unlawful means depriving the owner of their ſervice, is to be fined not exceeding two hundred dollars.

Stealing of negroes or other ſlaves is puniſhed with death.

A free negro giving or ſelling a certificate of his freedom to a ſlave in order that he may perſonate the grantee of ſuch certificate and thereby obtain his freedom, forfeits a ſum not exceeding three hundred dollars, and upon non-payment may be ſold for a term not exceeding ſeven years.

Free negroes are not permitted to give evidence againſt a white perſon nor in favor of a ſlave petitioning for freedom; neither can they vote at elections or be elected or appointed to any office of profit or truſt.

A ſlave giving falſe teſtimony againſt another ſlave ſhall have one ear cut off on the day of conviction and receive thirty-nine laſhes, and on the following day ſhall have the other ear cut off and the ſame number of laſhes repeated.

No perſon is to join in marriage any negro or molatto ſlave with a white perſon under penalty of five thouſand pounds of tobacco.

Free negroes or molattoes intermarrying with whites are liable to become ſlaves for life except molattoes born of white women who become ſervants for ſeven years.

A white woman having a child by a negro or other ſlave becomes (if free) a ſervant for ſeven years, and if a ſervant is obliged to ſerve ſeven years after her preſent term expires; the ſame penalty is to be inflicted on a free negro having a child by a negro woman who is a ſlave, on a mollatto woman having a baſtard child by a ſlave, on a free negro

negro woman having a baſtard child by a white man and on a white man begetting a baſtard child on a negro woman whether ſhe is a ſlave or free.

The baptiſm of negroes or molattoes is declared not to give any right to freedom.

Maſters permitting their ſlaves to go about begging may be held under recognizance by the county Courts.

The owner of any negro or other ſlave who ſhall ſuffer ſuch ſlave to keep horſes or to raiſe cattle or hogs as his proper right, forfeits five hundred pounds of tobacco and ſuch horſes, &c. are alſo forfeited.

A perſon permitting his ſlave to go at large or to hire himſelf, and the perſon hiring or contracting with any ſuch ſlave, forfeits five pounds per month, except ten days at harveſt or in caſe the ſlave is a pilot.

Any perſon entertaining a runaway ſervant or ſlave, forfeits five hundred pounds of tobacco for every twenty-four hours, and if a free negro or molatto harbours any ſuch ſervant or ſlave he forfeits one thouſand pounds of tobacco: If he be unable to pay, the Juſtices may immediately order ſatisfaction by ſervitude or otherwiſe.

Negroes meeting together from home without licence from their owners or overſeers on the ſabbath or other holy day may be whipped by the conſtable not exceeding thirty-nine laſhes, and any negro of the owner of the place where ſuch meeting may be, refuſing to aſſiſt the conſtable ſhall receive thirty-nine laſhes. Any perſon encouraging the meeting of ſlaves except on lawful occaſions, forfeits one thouſand pounds of tobacco.

Any ſtrange negro coming on a plantation not his maſter's and not on his maſter's lawful occaſions, being ordered to go home and refuſing or delaying ſo to do, may be whipped by order of the owner of ſuch plantation not exceeding thirty-nine laſhes.

Slaves ſelling liquor or keeping entertainment at any muſter ground, horſe-race, &c. without the order or permiſſion of their owners are liable to be puniſhed at the diſcretion of a Juſtice of the peace not exceeding twenty ſtripes.

A free negro or molatto living idle without any viſible means of maintenance, may be apprehended and obliged to give ſecurity for his good behaviour in a ſum not exceeding thirty dollars, and in default thereof, may be ordered by the Juſtice to leave the ſtate within five days, and if he ſhall refuſe to comply or ſhall return within ſix months, he

may

may be committed, and if he does not diſcharge the priſon fees within twenty days, may be ſold by the Sheriff for a term not exceeding ſix months.

Negroes and other ſlaves running into the wood from their maſters' ſervice, and deſtroying cattle, &c. upon refuſal to ſurrender themſelves or making reſiſtance againſt perſons legally empowered, may be killed and deſtroyed.

If any ſlave is killed in reſiſting any officer or other perſon endeavouring to apprehend him ſuch officer or other perſon is indemnified from any proſecution.

A negro or other ſlave ſtriking a white perſon is to have one of his ears cropt.

It is lawful for the Juſtices of the county Court, to puniſh ſlaves convicted of going abroad in the night, or riding horſes in the day time without leave, by cropping, branding in the cheek with the letter R. or otherwiſe, not extending to life or to render them unfit for labour.

Any ſlave attempting or conſpiring to raiſe an inſurrection or to murder any perſon, or to commit a rape upon a white woman, or to burn any dwelling-houſe or out-houſe wherein there are perſons or goods, is puniſhed with death without benefit of Clergy, unleſs the Judges, in their diſcretion, think proper to ſubſtitute labor on the public roads for a period not exceeding fourteen years.

Any negro or other ſlave, convicted by his own confeſſion or verdict of Jury of pettit treaſon, murder or arſon, is to have his right hand cut off, to be hanged in the uſual manner, to have his head ſevered from his body, the body divided into four quarters, and his head and quarters ſet up in the moſt public places of the county.

The full value of an executed ſlave is adjudged by the Court and paid to the owner.

A negro or molatto, guilty of pilfering or other crime or miſdemeanor, cognizable by the county Court, may upon full proof before a Juſtice of the peace, be ordered to be whipped not exceeding forty laſhes.

No negro or other ſlave is permitted to carry a gun or other offenſive weapon from his maſter's land without licence, and any one offending therein may be whipped.

Abſtracts

Abſtracts of the laws of Virginia reſpecting ſlavery.

Free negroes and molattoes are by the conſtitution excluded from the right of ſuffrage, and of conſequence from office too.

All negroes or molattoes, except ſuch as are houſe keepers or reſide upon the frontiers, are prohibited from keeping or carrying any gun, powder, ſhot, club or other weapon, offenſive or defenſive.

Lifting the hand in oppoſition to a white perſon in any caſe, except a wanton aſſault on the negro or molatto, is puniſhable by whipping.

No negro or molatto can be a witneſs in any proſecution or civil ſuit in which a white perſon is a party.

Emancipated negroes may be ſold to pay the debts of their former maſter, contracted before their emancipation, and they may be hired out to ſatisfy their taxes where no ſufficient diſtreſs can be had—their children are to be bound out apprentice by the overſeers of the poor.

Free negroes have all the advantages in capital caſes which white men are entitled to, except a trial by a Jury of their own complection: and a ſlave ſuing for his freedom ſhall have the ſame privilege.

Free negroes reſiding or employed to labour in any town muſt be regiſtered; the ſame thing is required of ſuch as go at large in any county. The penalty in both caſes is a fine upon the perſon employing or harbouring them, and impriſonment of the negro.

The migration of free negroes or molattoes to this ſtate prohibited, and thoſe who do migrate to it, may be ſent back to the place from whence they came.

Any perſon having one fourth negro blood in him is deemed a molatto.

No diſtinction made between negroes and molattoes, whether ſlaves or freemen.

Importation of ſlaves either by land or water prohibited—ſlaves brought into the ſtate and kept therein one whole year or ſo long at different times as ſhall amount to a year, to be free—every perſon importing ſlaves, ſubject to a fine of two hundred dollars for each ſlave imported—the ſeller or buyer to pay a fine of one hundred dollars.

No

No perſons to be ſlaves, except ſuch as were ſo on the ſeventeenth of October, 1785, and the deſcendants of the females of them.

Any Juſtice of the peace having notice of the importation of any ſlaves directly or indirectly from any part of Africa or the Weſt-Indies, to cauſe ſuch ſlaves to be apprehended and tranſported out of the commonwealth.

Slaves not to go abroad without leave in writing from their maſters, and if they do, may be whipped—any perſon ſuffering a ſlave to remain on his plantation for four hours together, or dealing with him without leave in writing from his maſter, is ſubject to a fine—a run-away ſlave may be apprehended and committed to jail, and if not claimed within three months (being firſt advertiſed,) he ſhall be hired out, having an iron collar firſt put about his neck—and if not claimed within a year, may be ſold.

Riots, routs, unlawful aſſemblies, treſpaſſes and ſeditious ſpeeches by ſlaves, are puniſhable with ſtripes at the diſcretion of a Juſtice of the peace.

The maſter of a ſlave permitting him to go at large and trade as a free man, is ſubject to a fine; and if he ſuffers the ſlave to hire himſelf out, ſuch ſlave may be ſold, and twenty-five per cent. of the price be applied to the uſe of the county.

Slaves not permitted to intermarry with any white perſon, yet no puniſhment is annexed to the offence in the ſlave, nor is the marriage void; but the white perſon contracting the marriage and the Clergyman by whom it is celebrated, are liable to fine and impriſonment.

Slaves not admitted to the benefit of trial by Jury—Juſtices of every county or corporation, conſtituted Juſtices of Oyer and Terminer for the trial of ſlaves charged with treaſon or felony—requires five Juſtices at leaſt to conſtitute a Court, and unanimity in the Court for his condemnation—allowed council to be paid by his owner—may object to the proceedings—thirty days allowed before execution, except in caſes of conſpiracy, inſurrection or rebellion.

To attempt the chaſtity of a white woman forcibly, is puniſhable by diſmemberment.

When any perſon conceives himſelf illegally detained as a ſlave, to make application to a Magiſtrate or to the Court of the diſtrict, county or corporation where he or ſhe may reſide and not elſewhere—petition for freedom to recite material facts, and the Court is to appoint council who ſhall report

report his opinion thereon before proceſs ſhall iſſue--penalty on any perſon for adviſing, aiding or aſſiſting a negro in the recovery of his freedom, in caſe he does not ſucceed therein, one hundred dollars, and be farther liable to the matter in an action for damages.

Widow's dower in ſlaves ſaved to her, although emancipated by the huſband's will, in caſe there is not property ſufficient beſides to amount to one third part of his eſtate—where part of the ſlaves only are emancipated, the widow's part to be taken out of thoſe not ſet free.

Huſband cannot emancipate his ſlaves by will ſo as to deprive his widow of her dower therein, if his other eſtate be not of value ſufficient to compenſate her for one third part of the whole eſtate

Selling of any free perſon for a ſlave, knowing ſuch perſon to be free, puniſhable with death.